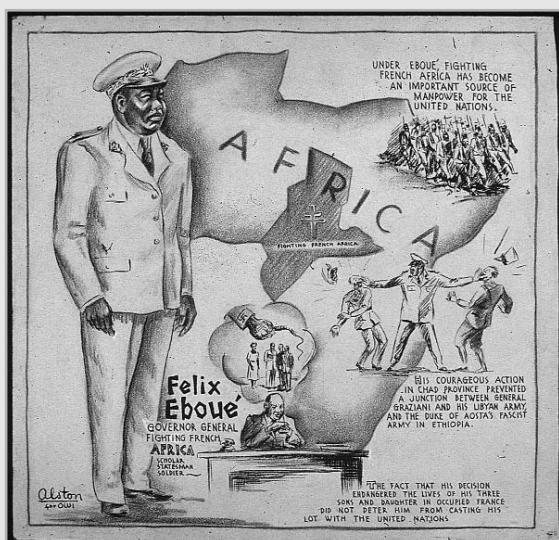


MEDALS AND MEMORIES MINUTES



Félix Adolphe Éboué, born in French Guyana, educated in France to be a civil administrator was considered to be the most influential black man of World War II. In 1940 with France defeated and governed by collaborationists headed by Pétain in Vichy, **Éboué**, as Governor of Chad was faced with the difficult decision of siding with the Vichy government or supporting the Free French forces who had joined the Allied nations to fight the Axis powers. Éboué chose to back De Gaulle's government in exile. As the first major colonial official to take this stand at a critical hour in the war's progress, Éboué helped push other French colonies in Africa over to the Allies. In 1941, a grateful De Gaulle appointed Éboué Governor-General of French Equatorial Africa, a position from which Éboué brought substantial manpower, materials and strategic locations to the Allies. Thanks to Éboué, British and American planes were landed and assembled in Nigeria, flown eastward to Khartoum in the Sudan and then northward to the Middle East. For his significant contributions to the war effort, among which was the outfitting of Fort Lamy, Felix Éboué was made an Officer of the Legion of Honour and received the Companion of Liberation and Colonial Medals, the latter with clasp. Felix Éboué's ashes are interred in France's Pantheon; he is the first black man to be thus honoured.